

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DACCA 01730 050212Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----050334Z 060484 /66

R 041010Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4104

S E C R E T DACCA 1730

EXDIS

FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, BG  
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR GENERAL ZIA TO VISIT WASHINGTON

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN TOOK ME ASIDE AT A DINNER PARTY AT MY HOME APRIL 1 AND SAID HE WANTED TO RAISE "ON A PURELY INFORMAL BASIS" THE POSSIBILITY OF GENERAL ZIA'S VISITING WASHINGTON. TABARAK SAID HE AND ZIA HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED THIS MATTER AND BOTH FELT THAT A VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE.

2. TABARAK SAID ZIA HAS ALREADY VISITED CHINA AND HAS BEEN INVITED TO THE SOVIET UNION. BEFORE VISITING ANOTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRY, ZIA BELIEVES IT IMPORTANT THAT HE BALANCE THE CHINA VISIT BY ONE TO THE UNITED STATES. IN ADDITION TO THE U.S. ROLE AS THE LEADER OF NON-COMMUNIST NATIONS, THE U.S. PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BANGLADESH, BOTH BILATERALLY AND ALTHOUGH MULTILATERAL AID AGENCIES. IN ADDITION TO HAVING GENERAL TALKS WITH THE PRESIDENT AND OTHERS, ZIA WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS HIS APPRECIATION FOR U.S. ECONOMIC AID AND EXPLORE ITS FUTURE DIRECTION.

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3. DURING THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSION IT BECAME APPARENT THAT ZIA AND TABARAK WERE THINKING ABOUT A POSSIBLE VISIT BEFORE OR AFTER THE JUNE COMMONWEALTH MEETING IN LONDON. TABARAK SAID THAT ZIA MIGHT ALSO TRY TO WORK IN STOPS AT CAIRO AND PERHAPS THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES DURING THAT TRIP.

4. I TOLD TABARAK THAT I WOULD GIVE HIM NO FORMAL RESPONSE, BUT HE SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE TIMING WAS EXTREMELY SHORT AND I WAS SURE THE PRESIDENT'S CALENDAR WAS CROWDED. HE SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THIS BUT, GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE THAT HE AND ZIA ATTACHED TO EVEN A BRIEF VISIT TO WASHINGTON, HE WOULD APPRECIATE AN OFFICIAL REACTION.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS ON WHETHER AT LEAST A BRIEF WORKING VISIT WOULD BE POSSIBLE BEFORE OR AFTER THE COMMONWEALTH MEETING. THOUGH I AM SURE WASHINGTON'S INITIAL REACTION WILL BE NEGATIVE, THERE MIGHT BE SOME BENEFIT FROM OUR STANPOINT FROM A VISIT IN ORDER TO UNDERSCORE OUR ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR BANGLADESH AND OUR HUMANITARIAN CONCERN FOR ITS PEOPLE. THOUGH ZIA IS IN A SOMEWHAT ANOMALOUS POSITION AS CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR, HE HAS RECEIVED TREATMENT AT LEAST QUITE TO THAT OF A HEAD OF GOVERNMENT (WHICH IN EFFECT HE ACTUALLY IS) DURING VISITS TO CHINA AND IRAN. IF A VISIT IS NOT POSSIBLE IN THE TIMEFRAME PROPOSED BY ZIA AND TABARAK, IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL IF WE COULD LET THEM DOWN EASY BY SUGGESTING, OR AT LEAST HOLDING OUT THE PROSPECT FOR, A VISIT AT A LATER DATE.  
MASTERS

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
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